

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 1 to 14, the independent claims being Claims 1 to 3 and 9 to 14. Claims 1 to 7 and 9 to 14 have been amended herein.

In the Official Action dated March 11, 2004, the title was objected to as not descriptive of the claimed invention. Claims 1 to 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,414,811 (Parulski). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejection respectfully are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, in a formal matter, Applicants have proposed a new title which describes more clearly the claimed invention, as requested by the Examiner.

The rejection of the claims over the cited art respectfully is traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1 to 7 and 9 to 14 have been amended herein more clearly to recite various novel features of the present invention, with particular attention to the Examiner's comments. Support for the proposed amendments may be found in the original application, e.g., in Figures 2, 4, 5 and 7 and the corresponding written specification.. No new matter has been added.

The present invention relates to a novel image quality adjustment processing apparatus, method and recording medium having recorded thereon computer readable program code for executing such a method. In one aspect, as now recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to an image processing apparatus comprising multiscreen synthesis means for composing one screen by executing a trimming process to a part of an input image and arranging plural pieces of that image in the one screen, image quality adjustment value storage means for storing image quality adjustment values for plural kinds of image quality adjustment processes, image quality adjustment process means for executing the image quality adjustment processes for plural images on the basis

of the image quality adjustment values stored in the image quality adjustment value storage means, and control means for converting an input image. The control means converts the input image into a first image to which an image quality adjustment process is executed by the image quality adjustment process means on the basis of an image quality adjustment value before performing an image quality adjustment operation stored in the image quality adjustment value storage means, and similarly for converting the (*same*) input image into a second image to which an image quality adjustment process is executed by the image quality adjustment process means on the basis of an image quality adjustment value for newly performing an adjustment operation, and then for displaying the converted first and second images on one screen with an arranged state by said multiscreen synthesis means.

Independent Claims 2, 3 and 9 to 14 recite similar features with respect to an image processing apparatus, an image processing method, and a recording medium having stored thereon computer readable code for executing such a method. In each aspect, an input image (the same image) is converted into a first image and a second image (and in some aspects, a third image), in which each of the first and second image (and third image) represents the (same) image but after having been subjected to different image quality adjustment processes based on different image quality adjustment values, such as no adjustment, a default adjustment value (which could be set at the time of manufacture), a set adjustment value (set by a user), and the like. As discussed in greater detail in the present application, in this manner the present invention provides a significant improvement over prior art systems and methods, in that the user can compare various image quality adjustment process results side by side at the time of image capture, so as to enable the user to select a desired image quality adjustment value.

Applicant submits that the prior art fails to anticipate the present invention. Moreover, Applicant submits that there are differences between the subject matter sought

to be patented and the prior art, such that the subject matter taken as a whole would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

The Parulski '811 patent relates to a method and apparatus for controlling rapid display of multiple images from a digital image database, and discloses a system in which (1) multiple images are displayed on a single screen, (2) an input image is subjected to image quality adjustment processing. However, Applicant submits that the Parulski '811 patent fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed features of the present invention. Nowhere is the Parulski '811 patent understood to disclose or suggest a system in which plural images, based on subjecting the same input image to plural image quality adjustment processes in accordance with respective plural image quality adjustment values, are displayed on one screen in an arranged state, as disclosed and claimed in the present application.

For the above reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1 to 3 and 9 to 14 are allowable over the cited art.

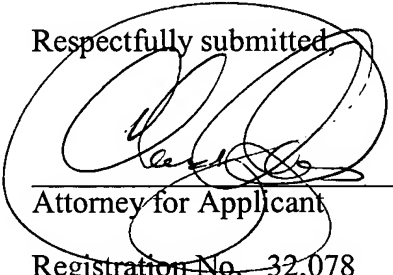
Claims 4 to 8 depend from Claim 1 and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of independent Claim 1, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

U.S. Patent No. 5,241,659 (Parulski), U.S. Patent No. 5,523,769 (Lauer), U.S. Patent No. 6,269,309 (Buckingham), and U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2001-0035875 (Suzuki) also are cited but not applied against the claims. Applicant has reviewed this art and believes that the claims are allowable thereover.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submits that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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